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Viewing cable 08MANAGUA318, NICARAGUAN RESISTANCE PARTY REMAINS DIVIDED

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Understanding cables

Every cable message consists of three parts:

- The top box shows each cables unique reference number, when and by whom it originally was sent, and what its initial classification was.
- The middle box contains the header information that is associated with the cable. It includes information about the receiver(s) as well as a general subject.
- The bottom box presents the body of the cable. The opening can contain a more specific subject, references to other cables ([browse by origin](#) to find them) or additional comment. This is followed by the main contents of the cable: a summary, a collection of specific topics and a comment section.

To understand the justification used for the classification of each cable, please use this [WikiSource](#) article as reference.

Discussing cables

If you find meaningful or important information in a cable, please link directly to its unique reference number. Linking to a specific paragraph in the body of a cable is also possible by copying the appropriate link (to be found at the paragraph symbol). Please mark messages for social networking services like Twitter with the hash tags **#cablegate** and a hash containing the reference ID e.g. **#08MANAGUA318**.

Reference ID	Created	Released	Classification	Origin
08MANAGUA318	2008-03-14 13:08	2011-08-30 01:44	CONFIDENTIAL	Embassy Managua

Appears in these articles:

<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758456.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758467.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758468.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-30/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2758464.aspx>
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<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4102/estrada-y-la-ldquo-doble-cara-rdquo-ante-ee-uu>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3966/la-ldquo-injerencia-rdquo-de-ee-uu-en-el-2006>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-23/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2758764.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-23/Mundo/NotaPrincipal/Mundo2758753.aspx>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4041/millones-de-dolares-sin-control-y-a-disolucion>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4040/la-ldquo-injerencia-rdquo-de-venezuela-en-2006>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/4047/rodrigo-barreto-enviado-de-ldquo-vacaciones-rdquo>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/NotasSecundarias/Mundo2757239.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/NotaPrincipal/Mundo2746658.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2757244.aspx>
<http://www.nacion.com/2011-05-16/Mundo/Relacionados/Mundo2746673.aspx>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3991/dra-yadira-centeno-desmiente-cable-diplomatico-eeuu>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3968/pellas-pronostico-a-eeuu-victoria-de-ortega-en-2006>
<http://www.confidencial.com.ni/articulo/3967/barreto-era-ldquo-fuente-confiable-rdquo-para-eeuu>

VZCZCXR05186
PP RUEHLMC
DE RUEHMU #0318/01 0741308
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FM AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2266
INFO RUEHZA/WHA CENTRAL AMERICAN COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP WASHDC PRIORITY
RUMIAAA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL//J2/J3/J5// PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MANAGUA 000318

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPT PLS PASS TO USAID LAC
DEPT FOR WHA/CEN GREENE AND NYMAN
DEPT FOR DRL G. MAGGIO
DEPT FOR USOAS
NSC FOR V ALVARADO
SOUTHCOM FOR FPA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/10/2018

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SUBJECT: NICARAGUAN RESISTANCE PARTY REMAINS DIVIDED

REF: A. 2007 MANAGUA 1592

1B. MANAGUA 209

Classified By: Ambassador Paul A. Trivelli for reasons 1.4(b,d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: The Nicaraguan Resistance Party (PRN) selected Julio Cesar Blandon as its new president in mid-February after more than a year of turmoil within the party's leadership structure. Blandon's election is unlikely to bring party unity, as many members accuse him of entering into a secret agreement with President Ortega to either sever the PRN's traditional relationship with the Liberals or to bring the party openly into Ortega's fold. As a first move, Blandon announced that the PRN will run independently in November's municipal elections. Critics insist that Blandon does not control the party base, which will continue to support Liberal alliance efforts. END SUMMARY.

New Resistance Party President Sympathetic With Sandinistas?

12. (C) In mid-February, the PRN elected Julio Cesar Blandon -- "Commandant Kaliman" -- as its new party president. The party repeatedly tried for more than a year to convene an assembly to elect a new head, but failed to do so due to executive committee in-fighting and lack of financial resources (ref A). The PRN had been in disarray since September 2006 when ex-PRN president Salvador Talavera, on the eve of the 2006 national elections, shocked his PRN colleagues and their then-Nicaraguan Liberal Alliance (ALN) allies by signing an agreement with then-presidential candidate Daniel Ortega.

13. (C) Blandon's election does not appear to mark the end of internal conflict and division. A former Ministry of Government employee, Blandon has been accused by the PRN base -- still loyal to Eduardo Montealegre (and the new Liberal coalition) -- and by Talavera of being a "Trojan Horse" sent by Ortega to sever PRN relations with the Liberal coalition and/or bring the PRN openly into alliance with Ortega's Sandinista National Liberation Front (FSLN). Questioned about these accusations in a February 28 meeting, Blandon and members of his new executive committee vehemently denied any connection to Ortega or the Sandinistas, reminding us that he and his colleagues had fought the Sandinistas for years as

Contras.

Resistance Party Going it Alone in November

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¶4. (C) Blandon, however, did not reserve his wrath only for Ortega and the FSLN. With equal vigor, he blasted "unscrupulous Liberal politicians" who had "repeatedly taken advantage" of the PRN's "unwavering support for democracy" to further personal political ambitions. Sweeping his arm towards his four PRN colleagues, Blandon revealed that each one of them had been "robbed" of a seat in the National Assembly or some other government position promised by Liberal politicians. He complained that "the (Constitutional Liberal Party) PLC never fulfilled its promises. Neither did the ALN."

¶5. (C) Smarting from these past injustices, Blandon announced that the PRN will run alone in the 2008 municipal elections. In addition, he insisted that local PRN structures that had aligned with other Liberal political parties for the 2008 elections must return to the PRN fold, immediately severing any previously negotiated deals. He claimed the PRN is legally represented in 100 percent of Nicaragua's 153 municipalities and had already selected candidates in 75 percent of them. Asked what chances he thought the PRN might have if it runs a solo ticket, Blandon predicted the PRN could win 25-30 mayor or vice mayor positions and 50-60 council positions in PRN strongholds in the northern departments.

Who Controls the Base?

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MANAGUA 00000318 002 OF 002

¶6. (C) Luis Fley, a former member of the PRN executive committee and member of the Liberal alliance committee, discounted Blandon's bold predictions, opining that Blandon's victory will have "no impact" on the PRN's base. Fley insists that the PRN's base remain firmly committed to the new Liberal alliance formed after the Supreme Electoral Council took control of the ALN from Montealegre (ref B). As part of the Liberal alliance, Fley believes Resistance candidates will be selected as mayoral and vice mayoral candidates in 9 and 15 municipalities, respectively. Running under the PRN banner, Fley predicted Blandon would win only a single municipality.

Comment

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¶7. (C) The squabbling and in-fighting that has plagued the PRN -- and the Resistance movement in general -- since Talavera's sudden alliance with Ortega in September 2006, has unquestionably weakened the PRN's credibility as a political force in Nicaragua. Thus, its decision, as a party, to strike out on its own is unlikely to siphon Resistance votes away from the Liberal alliance. The party base turned its collective back on the PRN when Talavera sold the brand name to Ortega in 2006. Traditional Resistance leaders such as Luis Fley have worked diligently to keep the party's bases focused on Montealegre, the ALN, and, now, the new Liberal alliance.

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